



Child Care In America - What Do Parents Expect?

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NACCRRA



The National Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies (NACCRRA) is a 501c3 nonprofit membership association.

We represent over 800 state and local child care resource and referral (CCR&R) agencies nation-wide.



NACCRRA's Mission



To promote national policies and partnerships committed to the development and learning of all children and to provide vision, leadership, and support to CCR&Rs.



About CCR&Rs

CCR&Rs are community-based organizations that help families, child care providers, and communities find, provide, and plan for affordable, high-quality child care.

- Train over 500,000 workers each year
- Serve over 5 million parents annually
- Reach all except 27 inhabited zip codes



The Importance of the Early Years



Babies are born “wired to learn”. The first three years of life are a period of extraordinary growth in all domains of development – physical, intellectual, social, emotional and linguistic growth.

Eighty percent of brain growth occurs by the age of three and 90 percent by age five.



The Children in Child Care



Nearly 12 million children under age 5 are regularly in non-parental child care (about 6 in 10). 6 million are infants and toddlers.

Preschool-age children of employed mothers spend an average of almost 36 hours a week in child care.

61% of mothers with children under three are employed.

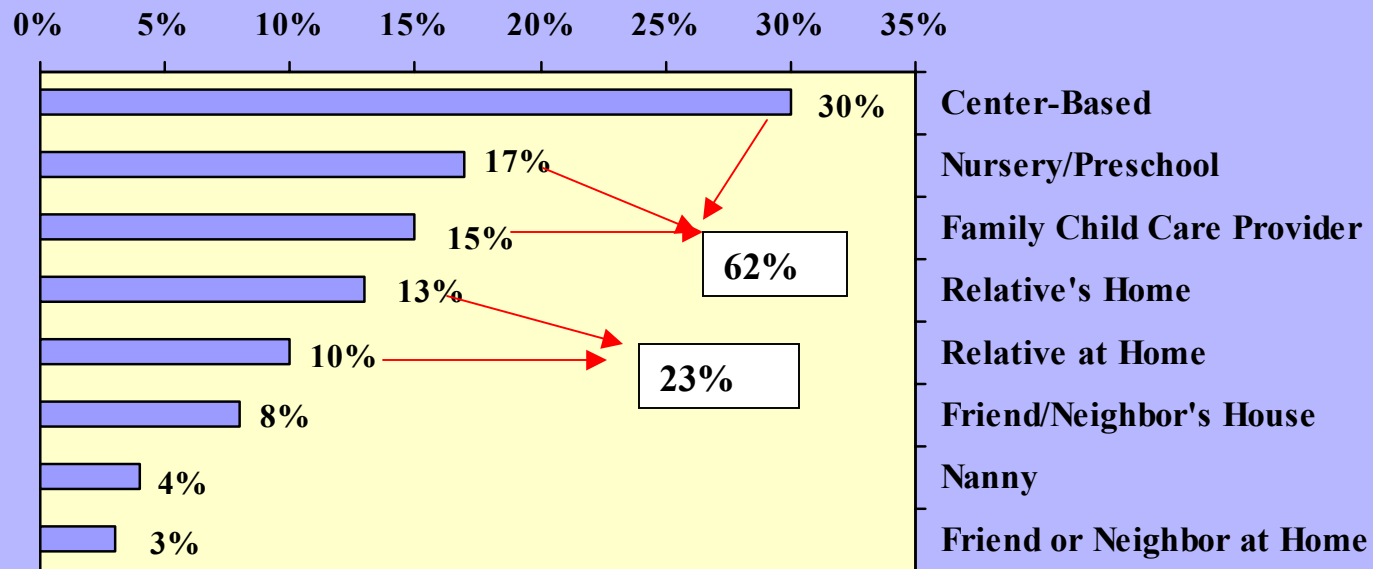
The average mother returns to work 3 months after giving birth

The cost of care for a one year old ranges from \$4,388 to \$14,647 per year



Where are the Children?

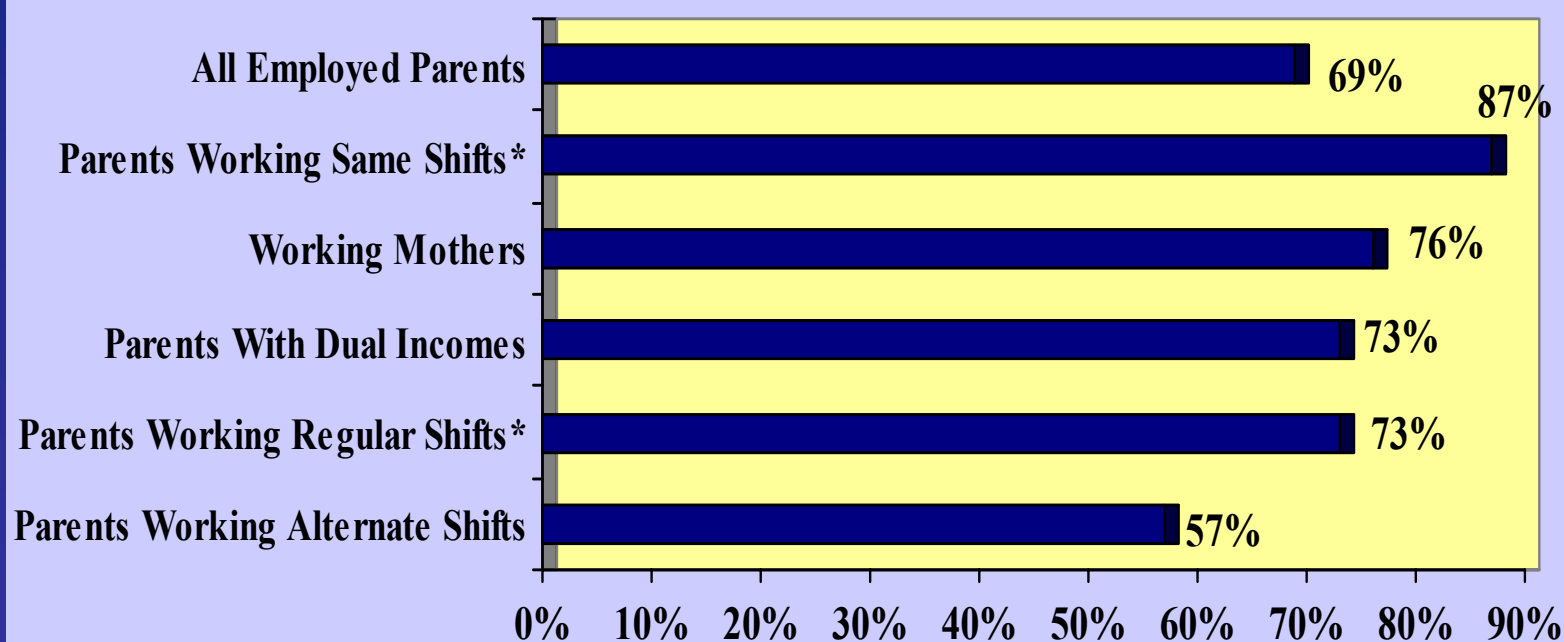
Child Care Arrangements Used By Parents



Nearly one-quarter of all child care arrangements is with relatives.

In Iowa, less than half of all child care is regulated, trained, and inspected.

Percent of Working Parents Using Child Care By Selected Demographics



* Parents Working Same Shifts: Parents who live in dual-income households where both parents work the same hours.

Parents Working Regular Shifts: Parents who work traditional weekday hours.



About the Quality?



**Most child care programs don't meet
AAP standards**

**According to NICHD, less than 10% of
child care can be described as high
quality:**

- 86% of centers provide poor to mediocre care
- A full 40% of infant care is poor quality
- Only 9% of FCC homes are rated "good"



Quality & Child Outcomes



Quality care results in better outcomes for children.

Children cared for in high quality settings have better vocabularies and language skills, more advanced attention and memory skills, and get along better with their peers.

Higher quality child care for very young children (birth to three) is consistently related to high levels of cognitive and language development.

States with higher standards and stronger licensing requirements have greater number of good quality programs.



The Child Care Workforce



The turnover rate for all child care teachers is 30%.
The only occupation with a higher rate is food counter workers (34%)

Research shows we are losing ground:

A lower share of center-based teachers and administrators have a college degree (down from 43% in 1985 to 30% in 2004).

The percentage of center teachers with a high school education or less is up from 25% to 30%.

Education levels are even lower in FCC (less than half have a HS diploma) and 1 in 9 has a degree.



The Child Care Workforce



There are 2.3 million caregivers of children under age six.

- 550,000 caregivers (24%) working in child care centers,
- 650,000 caregivers (28%) working in family child care,
- 804,000 caregivers (35%) are paid relatives, and
- 298,000 (caregivers 13%) are paid nonrelatives.



Who are they?



- 95% are female
- 41% have children of their own
- 10% are single parents
- They earn an average of \$8.68 per hour
- Two of five are self-employed
- Most have a HS diploma and no experience when they start work
- Most have no health care



What does this mean?



➤ There are over 12 million children in non-parental child care who:

- Are in the most formative years of development
- Lack the verbal skills to communicate problems

➤ They are in settings that largely unlicensed and not inspected

➤ They are being cared for by adults who:

- have only minimal education
- have little or no training before they begin work,
- earn wages that put them near poverty
- have no background screenings



What Parents Think



NACCRRA's Efforts to Understand What Parents Think



- Reviewed National Studies
- Conducted Focus Groups
- Conducted National Survey of Parents
- Surveyed CCR&Rs on Parent Services
- Established “Parent Central”



What we learned from past studies:

Parents:

- **want choices** when it comes to child care.
- view child care as *their responsibility*, but feel government & communities can help them.



NACCRRA's Parent Focus Groups

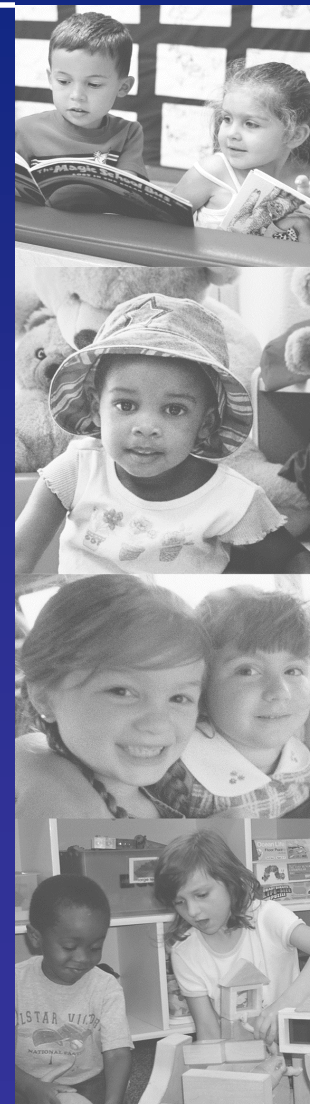


- **Focus Groups held in 7 locations**

(Oakland, Wash. DC, Indianapolis, Boston, Pittsboro, Bartlesville & San Antonio)

- **163 parent**
- **Varied economic, racial and ethnic background**
- **Primarily (8 in 10) women**

Parents understand the issues better than most think!



What Did Parents Tell Us?



Cost, cleanliness and location are the first things parents' look at, but they want other things as well:

- the interaction between the child and the caregiver is of utmost importance,
- parents want their children to be in a place where they learn new things,
- parents want their child to receive individualized attention, and
- parents believe child care is regularly inspected and the teachers are trained.



NACCRRA's Parent Focus Groups



- How do parents describe child care?
 - Necessary
 - Expensive
 - Frustrating
 - Costly
 - Hard to find

Question: Why do parents decide to go to work?

Answer: Because they cannot afford to stay at home. (9in 10)



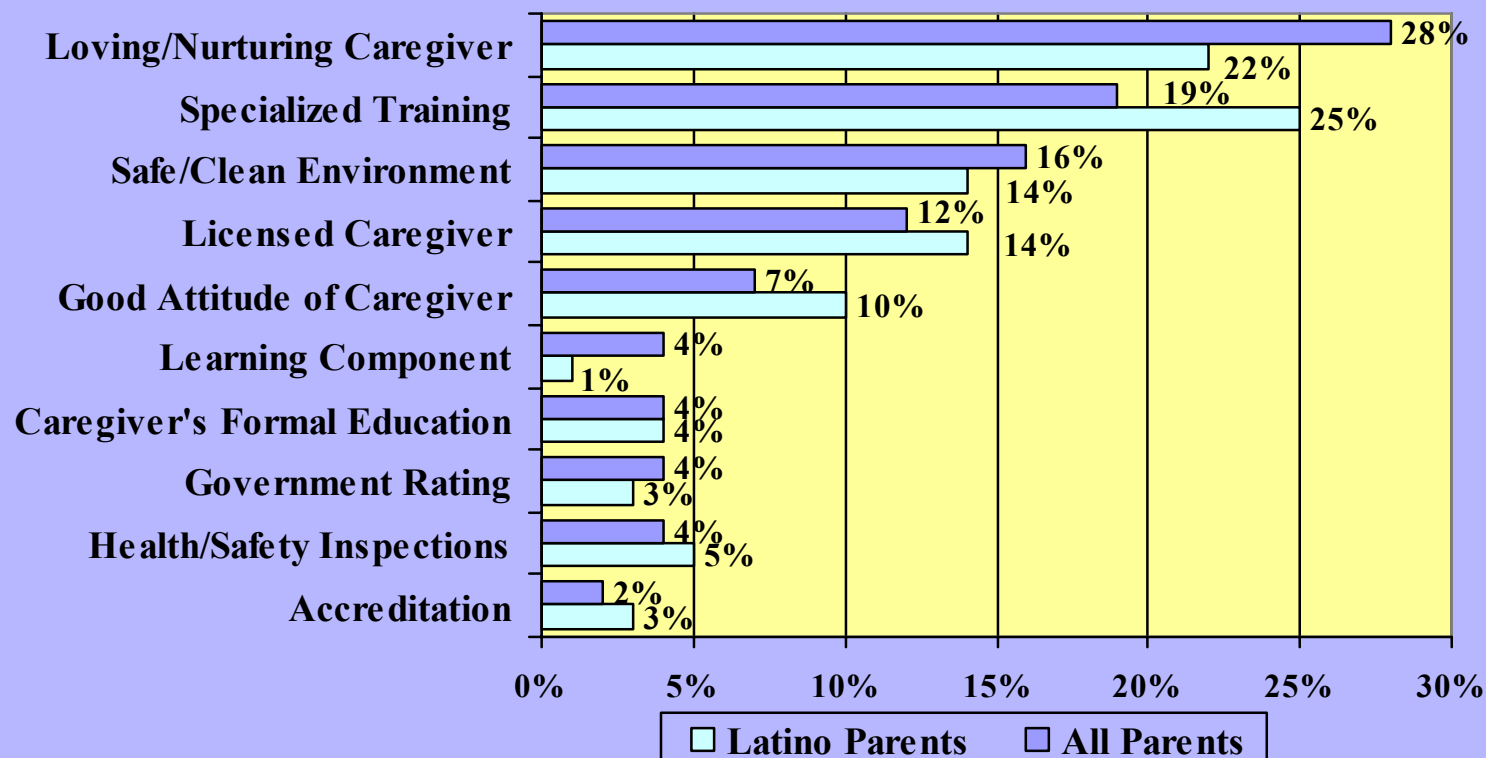
NACCRRA's National Parent Poll



- Parents' use and perceptions of child care
 - Definition of “quality” (loving/caring and trained caregivers)
 - Parents' goals for child care (safe and learning)
 - Assumptions about standards and training (regular inspections and trained caregivers)



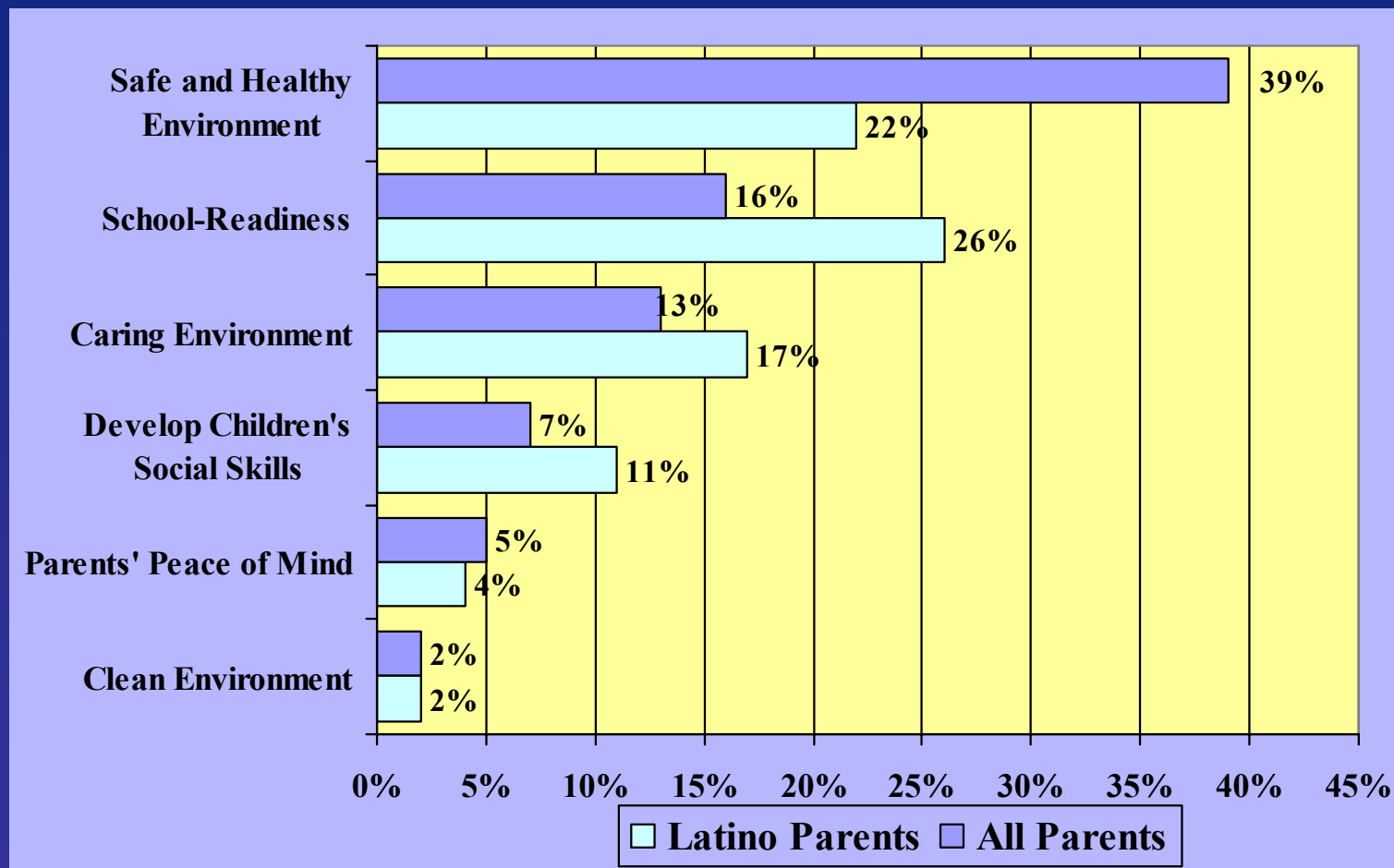
Parents Associate High Quality With:



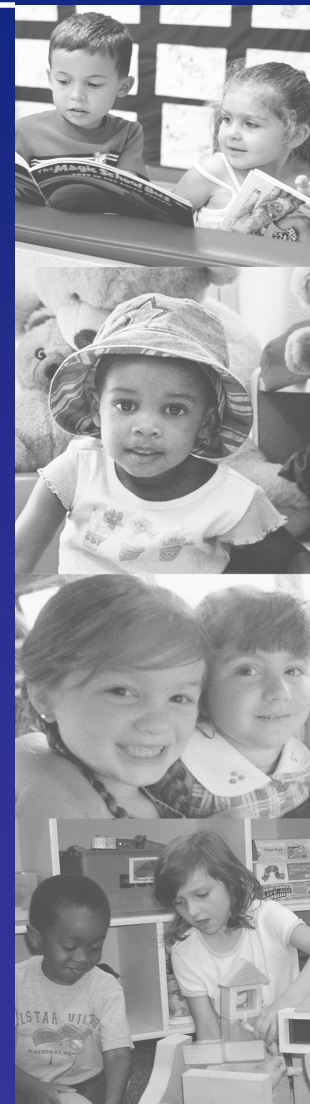
Latino parents value the training of the workers and are most interested in school readiness.



What Parents Primarily Want From Their Child Care Arrangement



Parents primarily want a safe and healthy environment where their children can learn.



Parents' Believe:

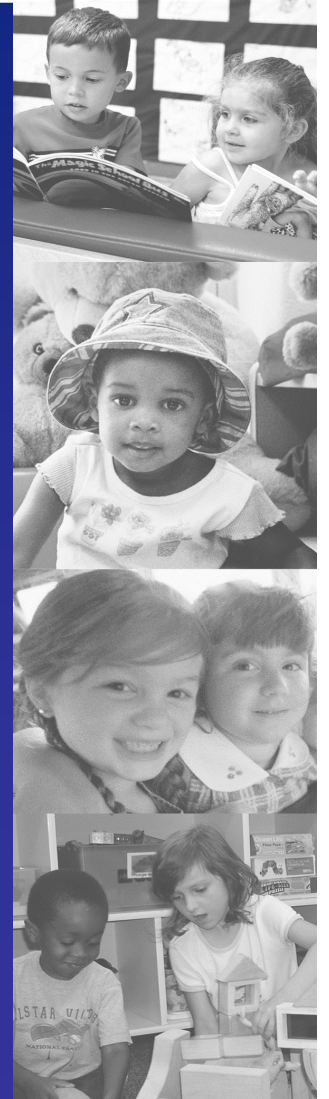


Standards	Percent Saying True Some or Most of the Time	
All caregivers provide learning opportunities	83	
All caregivers are trained in first-aid/CPR	72	
All caregivers are trained to recognize or report child abuse	70	
All caregivers must have a background check	67	
All caregivers are required to have training in child development	65	
All child care programs are required to be licensed	63	
All caregivers are trained in child discipline and guidance	58	
The government inspects all child care programs	58	

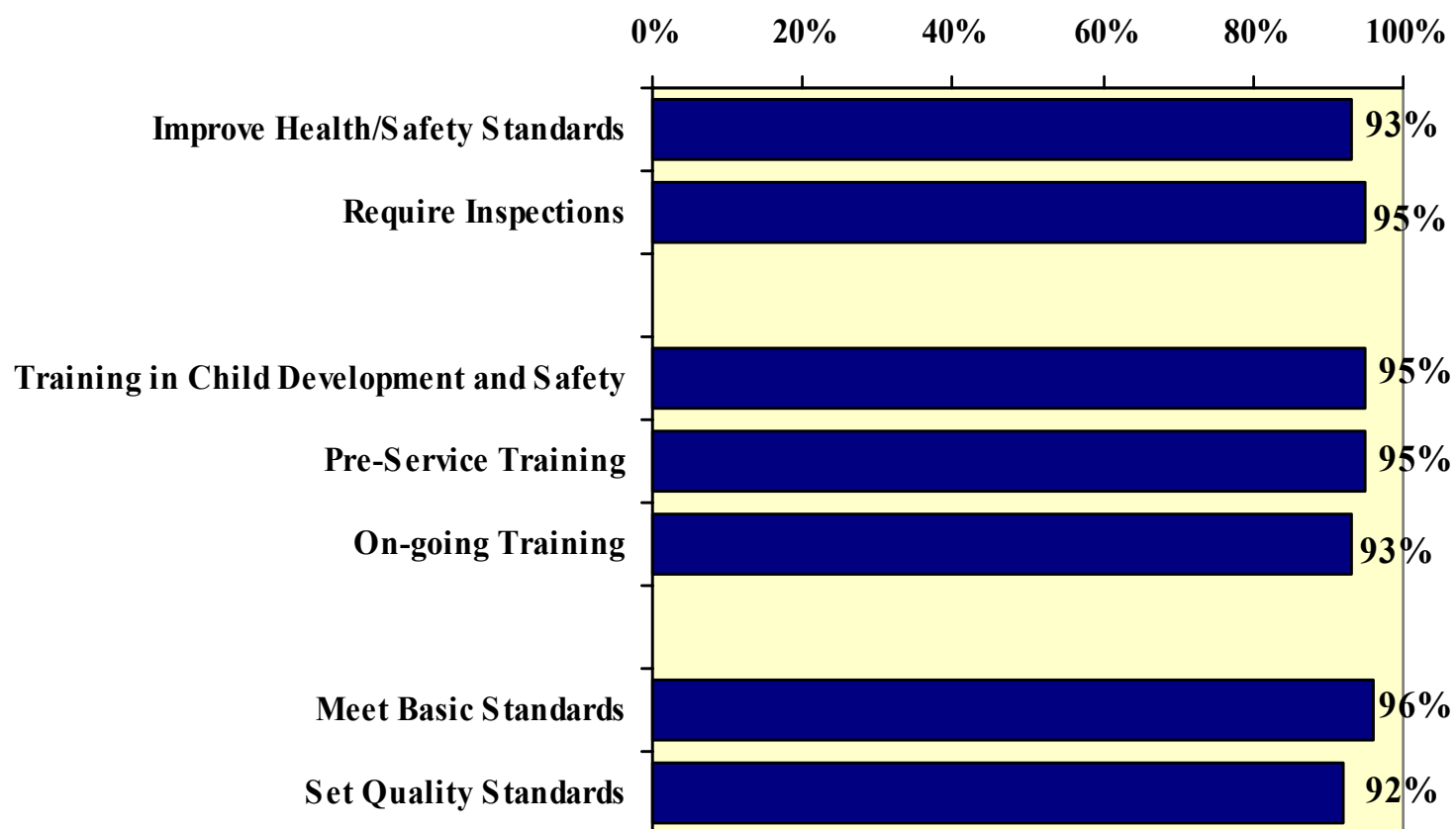
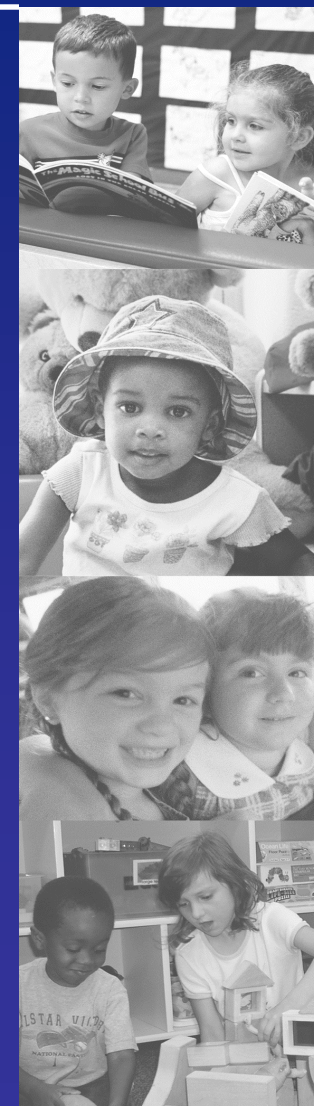
Parent Favor Requiring Standards



- Almost ALL parents (96%) favor requiring all child care to meet basic standards of quality.
- More than 9 in 10 parents favor:
 - Training requirements (Pre-Service: 95%; On-going: 93%; Specific child-related topics: 95%)
 - Regular, unannounced inspections (95%)
 - Improving health and safety standards (93%)

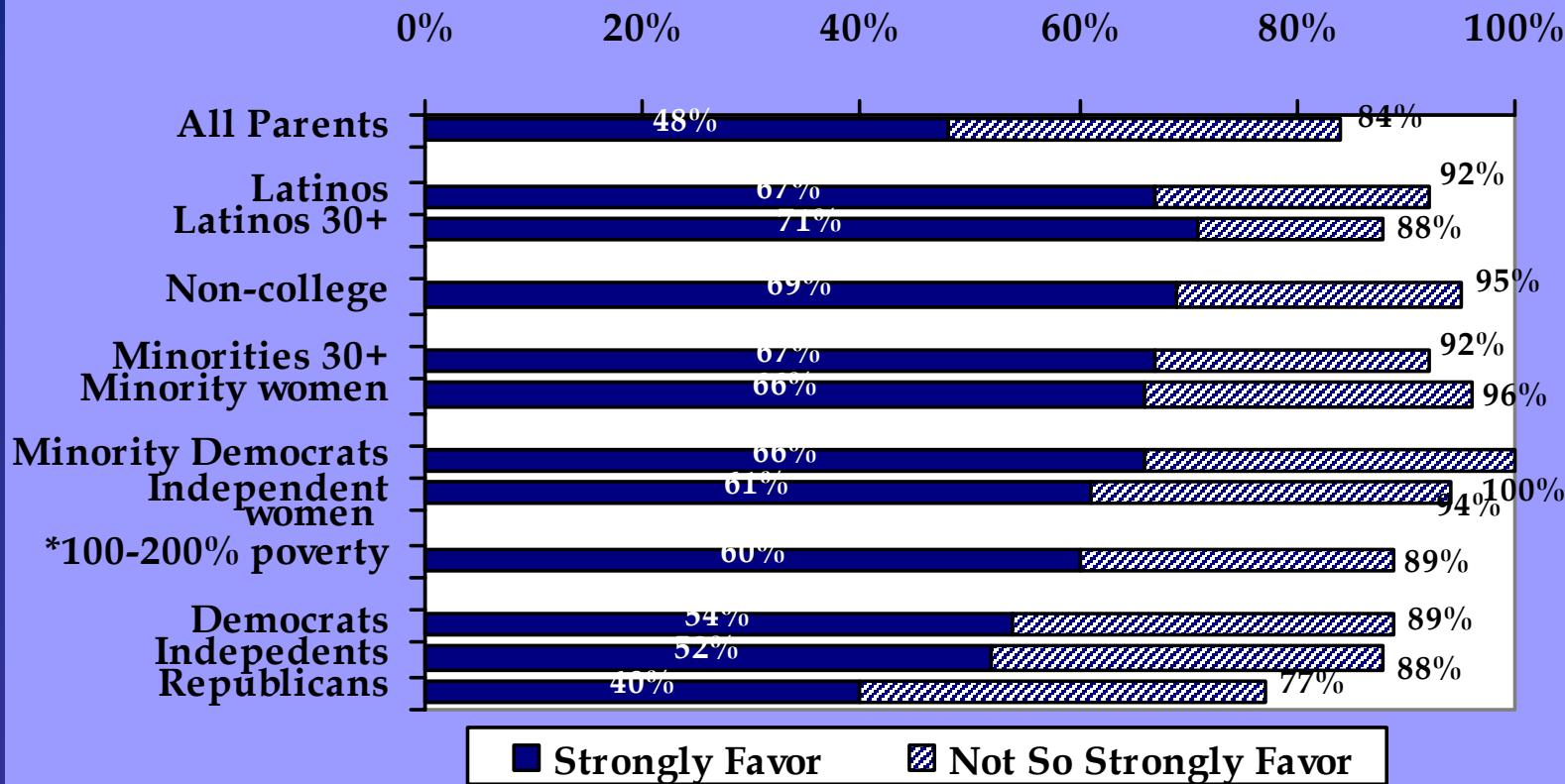


Parents Support Proposals To Improve Child Care Quality



Parents Support Increased Funding to Improve Child Care Quality

(Percent Favor)



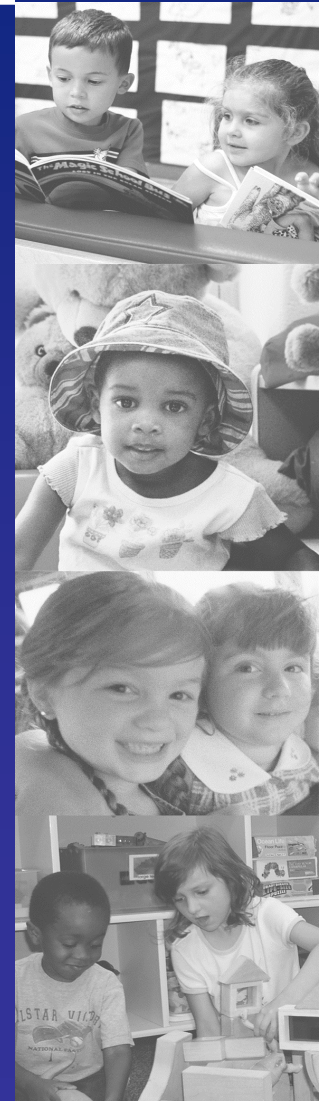
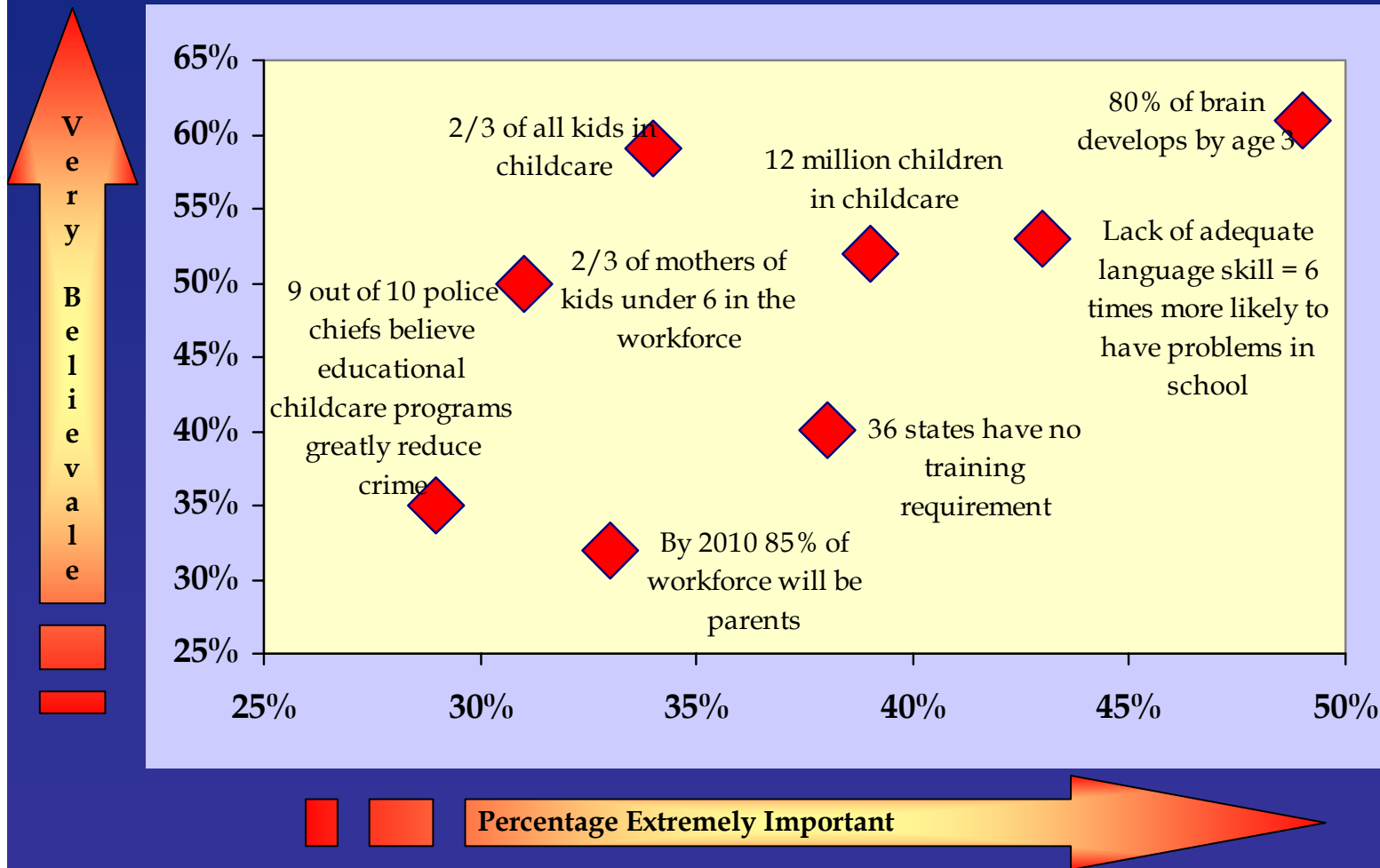
In fact, more than 8 in 10 parents are willing to pay \$10 more in taxes each year to improve child care quality.



Believability/Importance of Child Care Related Facts

ALL PARENTS

(Percent Saying "Very Believable" and "Extremely Important")



The Reality of Child Care



Current child care standards are doing little to protect the health and safety of children or to promote their school success.

- *Inspections are not routine*
- *Staff training is minimal*
- *Background check requirements are spotty*



Action Agenda

- Expand the child care infrastructure (training and oversight functions) to ensure children are in safe and healthy environments.
- Reform the child care subsidy system to allow parents with low-paying jobs to have access to quality child care.
- Require all child care providers caring for children not related to themselves on a regular basis and for a fee to meet health and safety standards through regular, random visits.
- Ensure all child care workers are trained and have background checks *before* they begin to work with children and make this a personal responsibility for those working with children.
- Educate parents on the key indicators of quality care.

Quality Child Care Matters



Thank You!

